

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 01514 311926Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 AID-05 ARA-10

/119 W

-----104221 010425Z /61

R 311745Z JAN 78

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7342

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

USMISSION USNATO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

DIA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: NATO, SOPN, GW, XW

SUBJECT: ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR'S PRESS CONFERENCE IN MOSCOW

SUMMARY: IN MOSCOW PRESS CONFERENCE, ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR ADMITTED PRESENCE OF FOREIGN MILITARY ADVISORS BUT NOT COMBAT TROOPS IN ETHIOPIA; REPEATED LITANY OF CHARGES AGAINST SOMALIA, NATO "INTERFERENCE" AND ARAB REACTIONARIES; CRITICIZED PRESIDENT CARTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENTS ON THE HORN; AND DECLARED THAT "IF SOMALIA IS NOT STOPPED BY ITS FRIENDS IN ITS RECKLESS ADVENTURE THEN ANYTHING MIGHT HAPPEN." END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 01514 311926Z

1. ASSUME DEPT. HAS SEEN VARYING TASS ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN SERVICE REPORTS AS WELL AS AP STORY (ALL DATED JAN. 27) ON ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR TSEGAYE MESHESHA'S JAN. 27 PRESS CONFERENCE IN MOSCOW. MESHASHA BEGAN CONFERENCE BY DELIVERING STATEMENT ON SITUATION IN THE HORN, AND THEN ANSWERED CORRESPONDENTS' QUESTIONS.

2. WE THINK IT NOTEWORTHY THAT, UNLIKE TASS RUSSIAN LANGAUGE ACCOUNT WHICH IGNORES POINT (PRINTED IN PRAVDA JAN. 29 AND MEANT FOR SOVIET DOMESTIC AUDIENCE), TASS ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACCOUNT (MEANT FOR FOREIGN CONSUMPTION) REPORTED ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR'S DENIAL THAT "SOVIET MILITARY PERSONNEL AND SERVICEMEN FROM OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES ARE INVOLVED IN HOSTILITIES ON THE ETHIOPIAN SIDE". AP STORY DEPARTS FROM BOTH VERSIONS IN QUOTING MESHESHA'S CLAIM THAT THERE ARE FOREIGN MILITARY ADVISORS BUT NOT COMBAT TROOPS IN ETHIOPIA.

3. AP REPORTER PRESENT DURING JAN. 27 PRESS CONFERENCE SAID THAT MESHESHA'S STATEMENT BEGAN BY JUSTIFYING ETHIOPIA'S DEFENSE OF ITS TERRITORIAL SOVEREIGNTY AND CHARGING SOMALI AGGRESSION. MESHESHA CHARGED THAT SIAD BARRE IS OPENLY INVITING FOREIGN POWERS TO ASSIST HIM AND CLAIMED THAT SOMALIA REFUSED TO ASSOCIATE ITSELF WITH OAU EFFORTS TO SOLVE THE CONFLICT. MESHESHA COMPARED THE SOMALI INVASION TO THE "FASCIST INVASION OF 1935-36", CLAIMED THAT ERITREAN GUERRILLAS ARE BACKED BY ARAB REACTIONARIES AND INTERNATIONAL IMPERIALISM, AND EXPRESSED GRATITUDE FOR ASSISTANCE FROM THE USSR AND OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES FOR ASSISTING ETHIOPIA DURING ITS HOUR OF NEED.
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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 01514 311926Z

4. AP REPORTER STATED THAT CORRESPONDENTS' QUESTIONS CHIEFLY FOCUSED ON OUTSIDE INVOLVEMENT IN HORN CONFLICT. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION FROM WEST GERMAN REPORTER, MESHESHA SAID THAT MINIMUM FRG MUST DO TO RESTORE RELATIONS TO PREVIOUS LEVEL IS TO CONDEMN SOMALI AGGRESSION AND TO CEASE PROVIDING AID TO SOMALIA IF THAT AID IS BEING USED FOR WEAPONS. IN RESPONDING TO OTHER QUESTIONS, HE VIROUSLY DENIED PRESENCE IN ETHIOPIA OF FOREIGN COMBAT TROOPS; ADMITTED THAT THERE WERE MILITARY ADVISORS BUT REFUSED TO COMMIT ON THEIR NUMBER OF ON REPORT OF CUBAN CAPTURED BY SOMALI FORCES; AND ATTACKED NATO COUNTRIES FOR INVOLVING THEMSELVES IN THE HORN.

5. ASKED HOW MUCH ASSISTANCE ETHIOPIA INTENDS TO TAKE, MESHESHA ANSWERED "NO MORE THAN NECESSARY TO DEFEND OURSELVES". IN RESPONDING TO ANOTHER QUESTION, HE DECLARED THAT "IF SOMALIA IS NOT STOPPED BY ITS FRIENDS IN ITS RECKLESS ADVENTURE THEN ANYTHING MIGHT HAPPEN". HE, HOWEVER, REFUSED TO DEFINE WHAT HE MEANT BY THIS. ON ETHIOPIAN-U.S. RELATIONS, HE

CRITICIZED PRESIDENT CARTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENTS ON THE HORN AS "VERY SERIOUS" AND OFFENSIVE TO "THE ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE", AND ADDED AMBIGUOUSLY THAT THE REESTABLISHMENT OF GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. DEPENDS ON THE FUTURE COURSE OF EVENTS.

6. COMMENT: MESHESHA WAS EVEN MORE NEGATIVE TOWARD THE U.S. IN RECENT MEETING WITH EMBOFF AT CUBAN EMBASSY RECEPTION (MEMCON POUCHED). IN CRITICIZING U.S. POLICY IN THE HORN, HE SAID THAT THE U.S. SHOULD PUBLICLY CONDEMN SOMALI AGGRESSION IF IT MEANS WHAT IT SAYS ABOUT THE LEGITIMACY OF ETHIOPIA'S BORDERS AND HELD THAT THE U.S. OPPOSED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 MOSCOW 01514 311926Z

THE ETHIOPIAN "REVOLUTION".
MATLOCK

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TROOP DEPLOYMENT, AMBASSADORS, PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Litigation History:
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Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
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Review Release Date: n/a
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Subject: ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR'S PRESS CONFERENCE IN MOSCOW SUMMARY: IN MOSCOW PRESS CONFERENCE, ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR ADMITTED PRESENCE OF FOREIGN MILITARY ADVISORS BUT
TAGS: SOPN, GE, XW, UR, NATO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3d17c7e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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